THE PACIFIC Commercial Advertiser.

Established July 2, 1856.

VOL. XXV., NO. 4507. HONOLULU, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS, FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 1897. PRICE FIVE CENTS.

A PACIFIC CABLE

Completion of Details at London, England.

LILIUOKALANI IS IN BOSTON

Death of Rear Admiral Skerrett, U. S. N.

End of an Honorable Career—Voluntarily Retired From the Navy.

NEW YORK, Jan. 6.—A copyrighted cablegram from London to the Evening Post says: The drafts of the Pacific Cable Commission were signed this afternoon on behalf of the British, Australian and Canadian governments after many months' investigation. The result, which is kept strictly secret for the present, is awaited with keen interest as the first tangible product of Joseph Chamberlain's aggressive colonial policy, an important step towards establishing British supremacy in the Pacific and supplying the empire with an imperial cable free from foreign interference. It is understood the report favors laying a cable at the earliest possible moment between Vancouver and Australia, under joint subsidies by England and Canada, certain of the Australian colonies and New Zealand. It must touch nothing but British territory, leaving Hawaii to be tapped by a branch line. The Laurier government made Canadian support absolutely conditional upon the absence of foreign stations, which would destroy the strategic value of the cable to the empire in case of war. The Canadian delegates strongly favored the construction and operation of the cable as a joint government enterprise by an imperial colonial cable trust of England, Canada and Australia, paying a third of the cost each.

English official opinion, supported by some of the Australian colonies and backed by strenuous opposition to the existing eastern company monopoly, favored a subsidy to an independent company, which course will be adopted probably.

The cable will cost about $10,000,000, to be put down and be ready within two years. The project now awaits the approval of the imperial legislatures. The only difficulty expected is in Australia, where intercolonial rivalries are certain to create opposition.

LONDON, Jan. 7.—The Chronicle announces that the Pacific Cable Commission has finally signed its report. It says that the lowest tender for a Fanning Island cable ranged from £1,517,000 to £1,880,000, according to whether a 12, 15 or 18-word per minute cable is laid.

GIVEN NEW YEAR GREETINGS.

Liliuokalani Tendered Compliments of the Season.

A delightful reception was that held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Lee, on Beacon street, Brookline, yesterday, ex-Queen Liliuokalani being the guest of honor, says the Boston Herald of Jan. 2.

The old colonial mansion house was filled with guests from 3 to 5 o'clock. The receiving party formed a pretty picture, as, grouped in the bay window, it greeted with charming cordiality the many friends who called. In the party were ex-Queen Liliuokalani, Mrs. Lee, Mrs. Kia Nahsolelin, Mr. Lee, Miss Lee, Mr. J. Haleluhe and Capt. Julius Palmer. The ushers were Misses Flora and Donalena MacDonald and Mr. Frank M. Goss.

The house was richly decorated with flowers. Music was rendered by Miss Sarah MacDonald, harpist.

The ex-Queen wore a gown of black velvet, with thread lace garniture, caught with jewels. The badge of the Mystic Shrine was prominent. Mrs. Lee wore a costume of French gray and lace, with a bracelet of gold on her arm, presented to her by her guest as a token of friendship. Mr. Lee wore a New Year's gift from the ex-Queen, a heart-shaped pin of pearl, with center of amethyst.

ADMIRAL SKERRETT DEAD.

United States Naval Officer Well Known in Honolulu.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 1, 1897.—Rear Admiral Joseph S. Skerrett, U. S. N., retired, died at his residence in this city last night.

Rear Admiral Skerrett was an Ohio man, and was appointed from that state in 1848. In that year and until 1852 he was attached to the razee Independence of the Mediterranean squadron. He was on the sloop Marion from 1852 to 1854, as a midshipman and navigator and watch officer, with station on the coast of Africa, where a squadron was located in those days. He was made a passed midshipman in 1854, having passed at the head of his class. The following year he was promoted to be master, and at the same time was commissioned a lieutenant, with duty on the frigate Potomac, on what was then known as the home squadron.

From 1856 to 1859 he was on board the Falmouth on the Brazilian coast, and from 1860 to 1862 he was again on the African coast, with duty on board the sloop Saratoga.

In 1862 he was commissioned a lieutenant commander, and for a year or more was stationed on ordnance duty at the Washington Navy Yard. In 1863 he was attached to the Shenandoah as executive officer. It was not until 1864 that he actively took part in the great conflict, though when the war broke out he ached to be placed in command of a ship befitting his rank of lieutenant-commander. In that year he was given command of the gunboat Aroostook, and engaged with the rebel fortifications at the mouth of the Brazos river in Texas in June, 1864.

After the war he was placed in command of the apprentice ship Portsmouth as a commander. He was on duty at the naval academy from 1868

LATE REAR ADMIRAL SKERRETT.

to 1872, during which time he commanded the Macedonian and the Saratoga on two practice cruises.

In 1875 he was placed in command of the Portsmouth, surveying in the Pacific. He was on duty at the Washington Navy Yard from 1875 to 1878, and was in charge of the first lighthouse district, in New England, from 1878 to 1881.

He commanded the flagship Richmond in the Asiatic station from 1881 to 1884, assuming command at Panama, and, by direction of the Navy Department, visiting Apia, Samoa, to settle a difficulty into which the United States Consul had become involved and to examine the coal station at Pago-Pago.

He succeeded to the command of the squadron on the Asiatic station in October, 1883, and continued to command until 1884, when he took charge of the naval asylum at Philadelphia. He remained in charge until 1888, and became a member of the Naval Advisory Board, which was engaged in important work.

He was made a commodore in 1889 and placed in command of the Portsmouth (N. H.) Navy Yard. Two years later he was made the commandant of the Washington Navy Yard, upon which duty he remained until his assignment, in 1892, to the command of the Pacific station. He was shortly afterward transferred to the Asiatic station, owing to the change of policy toward Hawaii, which took place with advent of the Cleveland administration. Secretary Herbert wrote him a letter at the time, stating that his transfer was not due to any dissatisfaction with his course at Honolulu. He was very popular in Hawaii, and on the occasion of his departure there was a great public demonstration in his honor.

The Skerrett family have been prominent in the social affairs of Honolulu, and this fact led to the unwarranted rumor that the intimacy of Mrs. Skerrett and her two daughters with the families of the Provisional Government was the cause of Commodore Skerrett's removal. Mrs. Skerrett knew the deposed Queen of Hawaii, and had several times called on her while in Honolulu. Mrs. Skerrett is of Southern birth, and entertained at the time of the war pronounced secession views. She made no secret of her opinions. Mrs. Skerrett made frequent visits to relatives in the South. She is supposed to possess the last official signature of Abraham Lincoln, which she secured to a pass between the lines on the fatal evening in April, 1865.

Admiral Skerrett voluntarily retired from service July 9, 1894, while in command of the Asiatic station, having the distinction, according to the records, of serving longer sea and shore duty than any other officer of the navy.

LOOKS DOUBTFUL

Committee Listen to Sugar Tariff Talk.

PROTECTION AND BOUNTY THE CRY

Oxnard Wants Reciprocity Treaty Abrogated.

Beet Sugar Industry in the United States Needs Protection and Bounty.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 30.—The third day of the tariff hearings was devoted to the sugar schedule. Four interests were represented, the importers, the cane growers, the beet raisers and the refiners. The importers were heard first. John Farr of New York opened the argument. Their recommendations, presented by Mr. Farr, were:

First—On all sugar testing 75 degrees or less a duty of 1 cent per pound, adding 3 cents per degree to 100 degrees.

Second—An additional duty of about a fourth of a cent differential on all sugars above 16 Dutch standard in color, to prevent refiners entering refined sugars at the same duties as raw sugars of the same test.

Third—An additional discriminating duty on all sugars from the bounty-paying countries, with authority to the President to raise or lower the duties on goods from those countries as bounties were raised or lowered.

This scheme, the importers estimated, would yield the Government a revenue of $50,000,000 a year, the amount of sugar paying duty being about one and a half million tons, and the average polariscope test being 92 degrees.

In reply to a question, Farr declared that there was no undervaluation of sugars now imported, but owing to the strict interpretation of the law by custom house officials, the tendency was to pay more duty than the law called for. Appraisals were made on the basis of estimated values at Trinidad and other places where there were no market values.

"What would you say," said Mr. Dingley, "to the statement furnished by Henry Brown of Massachusetts that the invoiced value of all sugar imported in 1893 was an average of 3-10 of a cent a pound under the London valuation?"

Mr. Farr considered that statement untruthful and entirely theoretical. London values were not representative, as Germany had absorbed the business. London prices on cane were merely nominal.

Farr was questioned by Payne of New York on the effect of the operation of the American Refining Company on the business. The importer asserted that only in occasional bargains could the American Sugar Refining Company buy its goods cheaper than other firms. Its influence had been to reduce the price of sugar throughout the world. Under the present differential rate of 3-10 of a cent the importations for the last year had been 65,000,000 tons larger than ever before. A differential of 1-4 of a cent a pound would enable the soft white sugars to compete with the centrifugal refiners.

Solomon Humphries of New York, the chairman of the committee appointed by the sugar trade, explained the difficulties of an ad valorem tariff on sugar and made a plea for a specific system. The change, he said, was unanimously demanded by the trade. Ad valorem valuations are unjust on account of the fluctuations in prices. The sugar schedule had given the Treasury Department more trouble than any other feature of the tariff act now in force. It had been estimated by the department that it would yield a revenue of $43,000,000, but for the past year the revenue has been less than $30,000,000, and under existing conditions it would not exceed $21,000,000 for the current year.

Higher prices for raw sugars would undoubtedly be the result of the schedule desired, Mr. Humphreys continued, but the advance would be so small that it would not be felt by the average family. A duty beginning at three-fourths of a cent at 75 degrees would yield $43,000,000 revenue. The production of sugar was now regulated by consumption, and no reduction in prices could be expected for several years.

Speaking of bounties, Humphreys declared that they were a demoralizing factor in the sugar business of the world. The German Government recently had raised the bounty to something over one-fourth of a cent a pound, which enabled Germany to dispose of all her surplus product. The system was working ruin to all the British Islands, so that they must resort to the same scheme or go out of the business. Instead of one-tenth of a cent on bounty sugar imported into this country, the additional duty should be equal to the bounties.

P. J. Smith, another importer, made a brief argument against ad valorem duties.

Colonel J. D. Hill of New York, representing the Cane Growers' Association of Louisiana, was the first to speak for the producers. He argued for a restoration of the duty of the act of 1883. He spoke of the situation produced by the bounty act of 1890, with the duty imposed therein on refined sugar, and finally said if a similar provision could be made in the prospective law, and its permanency be guaranteed, the sugar producers would prefer it; but all things considered, they asked for a re-enactment of the provisions of the act of 1883. He produced figures to show the reduction in the price of refined sugar under the operation of that act at the time when crops were being marketed, to show the benefits to the country at large from home competition.

In answer to a question by Johnson of North Dakota, Colonel Hill expressed the opinion that with the protection asked the cane and beet sugar industries of the United States could produce enough sugar to supply the consumption of this country. He further declared that he had not the slightest doubt, if the bounty of 1890 had been continued during the term of years provided for, the sugar growers would have supplied the consumption by the time the bounty period expired.

The cane growers asked:

First—That specific duties dependent on both polariscopic test and color standard be imposed in lieu of ad valorem duties.

Second—That, commencing with 1.40 cts. for sugar testing 75 and under 16, Dutch standard, the rate be proportionately increased.

Third—That duties equal to export bounties be imposed to offset them.

Fourth—A proportionate duty on molasses.

Fifth—That the new law have effect from the passage of the act.

Sixth—That reciprocity treaties, if they are adopted, be without injury to the domestic sugar industry, on lines which recognize the overshadowing importance of developing sugar production in the United States, and by such methods as insure a protection equivalent to that suggested.

J. H. Sypher of this city was called by Chairman Dingley, and gave it as his opinion that the cost of refining by the Sugar Trust was not to exceed one-fourth of 1 cent, while the cost of refining in Louisiana would perhaps reach three-eighths of 1 cent.

Mr. Humphreys was recalled and asked the cost of refining sugar, but he said he did not care to set his opinion against actual refiners. He thought, however, in a general way, that the cost of refining sugars testing 96 degrees was about as stated by Mr. Sypher, but sugar of lower grade, with more impurities, would, of course, be much higher. For instance, it would cost 1 cent to refine sugar of 85 degrees.

Henry T. Oxnard of Grand Island, Neb., president of the American Beet Sugar Society, in behalf of the industry, charged that the present tariff not only failed to give protection to the sugar raisers, but discouraged the investment of additional capital. It has been predicted that under the McKinley law the beet sugar industry would grow rapidly, and three refineries had been built in the administration of that law, but since then the change had deterred new investments. Any schedule on sugar which had been in force since 1860, except that of the Wilson tariff, would permit the increase of beet sugar growing. Beet sugar could be produced in twenty States, and under a proper tariff the United States could in fifteen years raise all the sugar necessary for home consumption. The beet industry protested against rates lower than from 1 3-4 to 3 1-2 cents a pound.

Oxnard delivered an argument in favor of a bounty, and proceeded to quote departmental reports and other authorities to show that the country had the climate and the capital required for the production of all its own sugar. Every other nation, even Sweden, which could supply itself with sugar, had taken every measure to do so. Even little Bulgaria had liberal duties and bounties enforced for this purpose.

The cost of labor, uncertainty as to legislation, export bounties in other countries, and the decline in prices were all operating to keep capital out of investment in beet sugar. Germany now pays 27.32 1-2 and 30 3-10 cents per hundred pounds export bounties, according to the quality of the sugar, and could afford to sell sugar in New York at 13 1-2 cents per 100 pounds less than the American producers, and occasionally to sell surplus products below the cost. Give Americans a reasonable bounty, guaranteed to continue for a reasonable time, and it would work wonders. The American was now obliged to compete with African cheap labor, as Egypt in the last fiscal year had sent $3,257,000 worth of sugar to the United States in British bottoms, which carried no return cargo. With war in Cuba and the Philippines, cutting off supplies from those islands, Germany was endeavoring to capture the American market. For reasons supposedly commercial, Congress had in 1876 legislated for the free entry of sugar from Hawaii. The treaty had never met with favor with the people, had cost $48,000,000, and had not greatly increased our exports to that country. The estimated duties remitted by the United States on Hawaiian sugar are $61,000,000.

He thought it was unjust to encourage these importers at the expense of revenue and our home producers. He urged the abrogation of the agreement.

Speaking of the conflicting interests involved in giving adequate protection to the sugar growers, he pointed to the sugar refiners who bought and refined the foreign product, and to the millers of flour and others who desired to use sugar in reciprocity agreements to obtain concessions for themselves. The refineries wanted the lowest possible duties on raw and the highest on refined. While, owing to the condition of the treasury, it might not be feasible to re-enact the bounty scheme of 1890, he thought the dual system proposed by the Senate amendments to the Mills bill in 1888, which imposed a duty and also gave a bounty, was now entirely practicable.

Oxnard took strong grounds against any reciprocity. He thought a dual policy (both duty and bounty) would be fair to all interests and jeopardize none. Such a policy, he said, would increase the revenue out of which the bounty could be paid, and would encourage the sugar industry. The schedule he proposed was a duty of 1 cent per pound on all sugars testing 75 degrees or less, 3 cents per hundred pounds additional for each degree between 96 and 100, with one-fourth of 1 per cent differential on sugars above 16, Dutch standard. He asked for the McKinley duty on molasses. The bounty